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Why the West Aligned with Israel Clings to a Settler State, That's Already Dying. Rima Najjar

Israel's Collapse Exposes the Rot of Empire

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***Author's Note**: This essay asks and answers a single, urgent question: Why are Western powers aligned with Israel — despite its collapse, its open embrace of ethnic supremacy, and its strategic liability? The answer unfolds across history, ideology, and institutional complicity. From the coerced origins of the U.S.-Israel alliance to the legal codification of Palestinian criminalization, the essay traces how Western governments, universities, think tanks, and cultural institutions have embedded themselves in a settler-colonial project that no longer offers liberal cover. It documents how crisis management replaces justice, how resistance is rebranded as terrorism, and how empire sustains itself through silence, surveillance, and semantic warfare. Israel will fall. And the West — having mortgaged its credibility to defend the indefensible — will face the cost of that investment. The question is no longer whether the settler regime will collapse. It's whether the West will collapse with it.*

Introduction: Stability Without Justice

Western powers are not confronting the crisis in Palestine — they are managing it. Their goal is not resolution, but equilibrium: a state of controlled violence, where the settler regime remains intact and indigenous resistance is fragmented, surveilled, and administratively contained. This is the paradox: they seek stability without justice, and containment without transformation. Every diplomatic gesture — recognizing Palestinian statehood, calling for "humanitarian pauses," proposing reconstruction frameworks — is designed to preserve the architecture of dispossession while muting its most visible symptoms.

This is why Trump's "Board of Peace" includes **Tony Blair**, architect of the Quartet's post-Oslo entrenchment, and why Canada's symbolic recognition of Palestine comes with no enforcement mechanism. It's why Germany bans pro-Palestinian speech while funding Israeli arms development, and why Macron can host Netanyahu in Paris days after condemning the bombing of Rafah. These are not contradictions; they are the operating logic of Western crisis management. The settler state must remain, but its violence must be rebranded, outsourced, or delayed.

So we must ask: why are Western powers aligned with a settler-colonial project that no longer offers liberal cover? Why do they continue to invest in a regime that openly defies democratic norms, international law, and basic human decency?

Israel was once marketed as "the only democracy in the Middle East," a bulwark of Western values. That façade is gone. The Knesset is dominated by parties openly advocating ethnic

cleansing. Israeli ministers call for flattening Gaza, starving civilians, and annexing the West Bank outright. The liberal alibi has collapsed — but the support remains. Why?

Because Israel is not merely a strategic foothold. It is a Western-engineered settler colony whose survival depends on a transnational Zionist infrastructure that penetrates policy, media, academia, and arms industries. This influence manifests in **AIPAC's** legislative chokehold, in the **IHRA** definition weaponized to criminalize anti-Zionist speech, in Hollywood's decades-long erasure of Palestinian narratives, and in the revolving door between Israeli intelligence and Silicon Valley's surveillance empires exemplified by **NSO Group**, whose Pegasus spyware was co-developed by Israeli veterans of Unit 8200 and is sold to democracies and dictatorships alike to surveil journalists, activists, and political dissidents, effectively globalizing Israel's model of population control. It also manifests in the institutional complicity of Harvard, Columbia, Sciences Po, and the University of Sydney — each of which has censored, punished, or expelled students and faculty for opposing Zionism. These institutions claim to uphold free inquiry, human rights, and global justice. Yet they enforce silence, because they are embedded in the same ideological consensus that treats Israel's existence as civilizational necessity.

But this consensus was not inevitable. As documented in ***If Americans Knew***, the U.S. was dragged into the Zionist project against its own strategic interests. Truman overrode his own diplomats, who warned that supporting Israel would destabilize the region, alienate Arab allies, and entangle the U.S. in permanent conflict. The U.S.-Israel alliance did not emerge from shared democratic values or strategic necessity — it was forged through ideological coercion. In the aftermath of the Holocaust, Zionism was reframed as a moral imperative, and any refusal to endorse Israeli statehood was cast as antisemitic betrayal. The Cold War deepened the coercion: Israel was rebranded as a civilizational outpost, a bulwark against communism, and a proxy for Western supremacy. This ideological scaffolding — rooted in guilt, propaganda, and strategic panic — forced the West into an alliance that contradicted its own interests, values, and legal frameworks. It was not consent. It was entrapment.

Today, the myth persists: that the U.S. and Israel are allies because "they share the same values." But what values are these? Ethno-nationalism? Militarized borders? Manifest destiny? The shock is not that Israel behaves like a settler state — it's that the U.S. sees itself in that mirror. **The alliance is still against U.S. interests.** It has cost trillions in military aid, provoked endless wars, radicalized global opinion against American hypocrisy, and undermined its own legal and moral frameworks. The U.S. is not gaining from this alliance — it is hemorrhaging credibility, influence, and internal cohesion.

Israel is not a mirror of Western values. It is a mirror of Western pathology: the refusal to confront settler violence, the addiction to domination, and the belief that indigenous life can be managed, not liberated. The genocide in Palestine does not merely reflect Western interests — it exposes their internal rot. The unraveling of liberal cover forces a reckoning with both complicity, and the cost of that complicity. The West has mortgaged its credibility, its legal frameworks, and its democratic pretenses to sustain a state that openly defies them. It has criminalized dissent, alienated the global South, and radicalized its own youth. The price of propping up a settler regime that no longer pretends to be liberal is both moral and strategic. The West is bleeding legitimacy, and Israel is no longer a mirror. It is a liability.

The Oslo Illusion and Its Aftermath

Oslo was never a peace process. It was a containment strategy — engineered by Western powers to defer Palestinian liberation while preserving Israel's strategic utility. The architecture of Oslo has overseen a more than quadrupling of the settler population in the West Bank, from approximately 250,000 in 1993 to over 700,000 today, rendering a contiguous Palestinian state a geographic impossibility. The accords outsourced repression to the Palestinian Authority, rebranded occupation as "negotiation," and created a donor economy (a de-development paradigm) that tethered Palestinian survival to Western largesse. The goal was pacification.

The architects knew this. Shimon Peres called Oslo "a way to end the intifada without ending the occupation." Bill Clinton's administration framed it as a "confidence-building measure," not a path to justice. The EU poured billions into PA institutions while ignoring settlement expansion. The World Bank and IMF designed economic frameworks that deepened dependency and erased resistance. And academic institutions — from Georgetown's Center for Contemporary Arab Studies to Sciences Po's Middle East program — trained a generation of technocrats to manage the fallout, not dismantle the system.

So again we must ask: why do Western powers uphold a framework that entrenches occupation, fragments resistance, and contradicts their own democratic pretenses?

Because Oslo gave them plausible deniability. It allowed them to claim engagement while outsourcing violence. It created a bureaucratic buffer between Western capitals and settler brutality. And it gave their universities, think tanks, and NGOs a role — not as challengers of empire, but as managers of its contradictions. The illusion served everyone — except Palestinians.

Oslo created a system where every Western institution could claim a role: universities could study it, think tanks could advise it, NGOs could administer it. It gave them relevance, funding, and access. But for Palestinians, it delivered fragmentation, surveillance, and deferred liberation. The illusion of peace allowed empire to rebrand itself as benevolence. And the institutions that should have challenged it instead became its stewards.

The deeper question, then, is this: why do these institutions uphold a project that undermines their own stated values — academic freedom, human rights, democratic governance?

Because they are not autonomous. They are structurally embedded in the same ideological scaffolding that treats Israel's existence as a civilizational necessity. To challenge Zionism is to risk funding, access, and legitimacy. So they manage contradictions instead of confronting them. They perform critique while preserving the system.

But that illusion is collapsing. The PA is discredited. The donor economy is imploding. And Israel no longer pretends to negotiate. The West is left with a naked settler regime and no liberal cover. The question now is not whether Oslo failed — it's whether the West can survive its unraveling.

The Collapse of Liberal Democratic Alibis

The liberal alibi is dead. Israel no longer pretends to be a democracy. Its ministers call for

flattening Gaza, starving civilians, and annexing the West Bank outright. The Knesset is dominated by parties that openly advocate ethnic cleansing. Settlers livestream pogroms. Soldiers post trophy photos. The judiciary rubber-stamps apartheid.

And yet, Western powers continue to call Israel a “partner,” a “democracy,” a “friend.”

This is not ignorance. It is ideological investment. The collapse of liberal cover has not led to rupture — it has led to recalibration. Western governments now defend Israel not with democratic language, but with civilizational panic. **They invoke “shared values” without naming them, because to name them would mean admitting what those values are: ethno-nationalism, militarized borders, and settler supremacy.**

Academic institutions have followed suit. Harvard rescinded fellowships for human rights advocates who criticized Israel. Columbia suspended students for organizing sit-ins. Sciences Po threatened disciplinary action against faculty who refused to normalize Zionist speakers. These are not isolated incidents. They are part of a coordinated retreat from liberal principles in defense of a settler regime.

The question is not whether these institutions believe in free speech or human rights. The question is why they abandon those principles when Palestine is named, why they manifest the “Palestine Exception to Free Speech” — a documented phenomenon identified by organizations like Palestine Legal, which has tracked thousands of such cases in the U.S.

Cultural institutions are no different. The Berlin Biennale censored Palestinian artists. PEN America disinvited speakers who criticized Zionism. The Sundance Institute pulled funding from films that centered Palestinian resistance. These organizations claim to champion artistic freedom and moral courage. But when the settler project is threatened, they enforce silence.

Why?

Because complicity is safer than confrontation. Because Zionist donors fund endowments, fellowships, and exhibitions. Because governments threaten visas, grants, and accreditation. And because the ideological scaffolding that upholds Israel also upholds their own legitimacy. To challenge Zionism is to challenge the West’s imperial self-image. And that is a risk they will not take.

But the cost is mounting. Students are radicalized. Artists are defecting. Scholars are refusing to comply. The institutions that once claimed moral authority are hemorrhaging credibility. The alliance with Israel is not just a liability for governments — it is a liability for every institution that has staked its reputation on liberal values while enforcing illiberal repression.

The reckoning is not coming. It is here.

Manufactured Ethnic States as Strategic Assets

Why does the West cling to Israel, even as its liberal façade collapses?

Because Israel is not an anomaly — it is a prototype. Western powers have long relied on manufactured ethnic states to anchor imperial permanence. Like the pieds-noirs of French

Algeria, Israeli settlers see themselves as a vanguard of Western civilization, their political power in the metropole (Paris then, Washington now) vastly disproportionate to their numbers, holding the imperial project hostage to their own supremacist demands. Rhodesia, apartheid South Africa, and Northern Ireland followed similar logics. These were not accidents of history — they were strategic designs.

Israel fits the mold precisely. It is a settler state engineered to serve as a forward base, a regional enforcer, and a civilizational proxy. But its utility goes beyond geography. It offers the West a model of governance: militarized borders, ethno-nationalist identity, and permanent emergency. It is a test site for surveillance technologies, crowd control tactics, and counterinsurgency doctrine. Israeli firms like NSO Group export spyware to Western governments. Through programs like the Georgia International Law Enforcement Exchange (GILEE), U.S. police chiefs travel to Israel to receive training in counter-terrorism and crowd control from Israeli military and police, directly importing tactics used in the occupation of Palestinian cities to the streets of American cities like Atlanta and St. Louis. The IDF's tactics in Gaza are studied at NATO academies.

This is not partnership. It is ideological franchising.

And yet, the alliance is corrosive. Israel's open embrace of genocidal policy has shattered the liberal façade. Western governments are forced to defend the indefensible, eroding their own credibility. Cultural institutions censor dissent. Universities punish critique. Civil society fractures. The cost of maintaining the settler regime is no longer just moral — it is strategic. The West is bleeding legitimacy, and Israel is accelerating the hemorrhage.

So why do they persist?

Because manufactured ethnic states offer something empire cannot relinquish: permanence. They are designed to outlast elected governments, diplomatic shifts, and popular uprisings. They anchor Western power in regions where direct control is no longer tenable. Israel, like Algeria before it, is not just a state — it is a mechanism. A settler garrison. A symbolic firewall against indigenous resurgence.

But the firewall is cracking. The global South is defecting. Youth movements are radicalizing. Internal dissent is growing. And the manufactured state is no longer stable — it is volatile, exposed, and unsustainable.

The question now is not whether Israel serves Western interests. It's whether Western powers can survive the consequences of pretending it still does.

Crisis Management vs. Justice

The West does not oppose Palestinian armed resistance because it is violent. It opposes it because it is effective.

Hamas, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), and other factions are not terrorist organizations — they are liberationist movements confronting a settler-colonial regime. Their tactics, rhetoric, and ideological frameworks emerge from the same historical terrain as the FLN in Algeria, the ANC in South Africa, and the Viet Minh in Vietnam. Each was branded "terrorist" by the colonial powers they fought. Each was later recognized — begrudgingly — as legitimate representatives of their people.

Hamas was democratically elected in 2006 in one of the most transparent elections ever held in the Arab world. A US diplomat involved in the 2006 monitoring, former President Jimmy Carter, called the election “orderly and peaceful” and stated, “I don’t know of any time that we have ever had a better and more open election.”

The West responded not by respecting the outcome, but by imposing a blockade, funding a coup, and criminalizing the entire Gaza Strip. The message was clear: Palestinian democracy is only acceptable if it produces collaborators. Resistance is not permitted — even when it is popular, organized, and rooted in international law.

The designation of Hamas as a terrorist organization is not a legal judgment — it is a political weapon. It strategically ignores that under international law, occupied peoples have a recognized right to armed resistance (as affirmed by UN General Assembly Resolution 37/43). While the laws of war prohibit targeting civilians, the designation is applied categorically to the groups themselves, not specific acts, criminalizing the very right to resist an illegal occupation.

It allows Western powers to dismiss Palestinian demands for liberation, justify collective punishment, and criminalize solidarity. It enables the U.S. to bomb refugee camps, the EU to freeze aid, and Canada to prosecute speech. It is not about violence — it is about control.

Meanwhile, Israel’s violence is never framed as terrorism. Its bombing of hospitals, schools, and UN shelters is called “self-defense.” Its use of white phosphorus is “regrettable.” Its starvation of civilians is “complex.” This is not a double standard — it is a colonial standard. The settler state is allowed to defend itself against the people it occupies. The indigenous are allowed to suffer, not to fight.

Western crisis management is built on this inversion. It seeks to pacify Palestine, not liberate it. It funds NGOs to “build resilience,” not resistance. It trains PA forces to suppress dissent, not settlers. It offers reconstruction, not return. And it criminalizes the very movements that demand justice.

Justice would mean dismantling the settler regime. Crisis management means preserving it — quietly, bureaucratically, indefinitely.

Preservation Through Rebranding: From Liberation to “Terrorism”

Western crisis management is built on inversion. It does not mean resolving conflict — it means enforcing imperial order. It is the language of counterinsurgency, not diplomacy. In Palestine, it means suppressing resistance, stabilizing occupation, and preserving settler control under the guise of humanitarian concern. The West does not manage a crisis — it manages a population. It does not seek peace, it seeks quiet. And it does so through aid conditionality, security coordination, and legal repression. The term itself is ideological camouflage: it transforms colonial violence into administrative necessity.

The strategy begins with language. The West does not dismantle Palestinian resistance — it rebrands it. Liberation becomes “terrorism.” Self-defense becomes “extremism.” Martyrdom becomes “radicalization.” This is not semantic drift. It is ideological warfare.

When Hamas won the 2006 elections, the U.S., EU, and Israel refused to recognize the result. Instead of engaging a democratically elected government, they imposed a blockade, froze aid, and backed a coup. The message was clear: Palestinian governance is only

legitimate if it collaborates. Resistance — even through electoral means — is intolerable. Hamas was not criminalized for its tactics. It was criminalized for refusing to surrender.

The same applies to the PFLP, DFLP, and other factions rooted in Marxist, pan-Arab, and anti-colonial traditions. These groups are listed as terrorist organizations not because they target civilians, but because they target empire. Their ideological frameworks — land return, armed struggle, anti-normalization — threaten the settler regime's permanence. So they are erased, banned, and silenced.

This rebranding is essential to Western preservation. It allows governments to justify surveillance, censorship, and military aid. It enables universities to expel students, NGOs to withhold funding, and media outlets to frame resistance as chaos. It transforms a liberation movement into a security threat, and a settler state into a victim.

And it works. The average American cannot name a single Palestinian faction outside Hamas — and even then, only as a caricature. European governments pass laws banning "support for terrorism" that include waving the Palestinian flag. Australian media refers to resistance fighters as "militants" while ignoring settler pogroms. The rebranding is total. It is not about truth. It is about control.

But the cracks are showing. Young people are asking questions. Scholars are defying bans. Artists are naming Zionism. The rebranding is no longer enough. The violence is too visible. The contradictions too stark. And the cost of preserving the illusion is rising. The cost of entanglement is already being paid. In 2024, for the first time, a European country (Ireland) and a member of the G7 (Canada) officially intervened in the ICJ case, not in support of Israel, but to argue for the court's jurisdiction — a quiet but monumental diplomatic shift signaling the erosion of the Western consensus.

The West can no longer manage the crisis by renaming it. It must now decide: will it confront the settler regime, or continue to criminalize those who resist it?

This is not just ideological — it is codified. The criminalization of Palestinian resistance is embedded in legal frameworks that treat liberation as threat and settler violence as policy.

The U.S. Anti-Terrorism Certification (ATC) forces NGOs to sever ties with grassroots resistance, criminalizes political expression, and turns aid into surveillance. The EU's PEGASE mechanism rewards the PA for suppressing dissent and punishes any deviation from Oslo-era compliance. Canada's Anti-Terrorism Act (Bill C-36) has been used to target Palestinian advocacy groups, restrict speech, and criminalize solidarity. Australia's Criminal Code Amendment designates Hamas in its entirety as terrorist, criminalizing even symbolic support. The UK's Counter-Terrorism and Security Act mandates universities to monitor "extremist" speech, silencing pro-Palestinian voices under the Prevent program.

These laws do not protect civilians. They protect empire. They transform solidarity into sedition, resistance into extremism, and liberation into criminality. They are not neutral — they are colonial.

A Call to Rupture

Israel will fall. Not because the world wills it, but because settler regimes cannot survive permanent contradiction. A state built on dispossession, apartheid, and ethnic supremacy cannot endure in an era of global reckoning. The façade is gone. The violence is visible. The

resistance is rising. And the settler project is out of narratives, out of cover, out of time.

But Israel will not fall quietly. It will drag its allies with it. The U.S. has mortgaged its global standing to defend the indefensible. The EU has fractured its legal frameworks to accommodate apartheid. Canada and Australia have criminalized dissent to preserve diplomatic ties. These powers are not just complicit — they are entangled. And as Israel collapses, they will face the cost of their investment: diplomatic isolation, internal unrest, ideological discredit.

This is not a warning. It is a forecast.

The West cannot reform its way out. It cannot rebrand genocide as "security." It cannot manage liberation through donor frameworks. It cannot silence the global South, its own youth, or the facts on the ground.

The only path forward is rupture: a severing of ties, a dismantling of complicity, a refusal to uphold a regime whose demise is inevitable.

Rupture means ending military aid. Ending diplomatic cover. Ending cultural normalization. It means naming Zionism as a colonial ideology and treating Palestinian liberation as a global imperative. It means choosing justice over empire — even if empire resists.

Because the longer the West clings to Israel, the deeper it sinks into its own crisis. The settler regime is not a shield — it is an anchor. And the only way to survive its collapse is to let go.

Palestine will be free. The question is whether the West will be free with it — or fall defending the lie.

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Featured image: Western institutions are not merely complicit; they are structurally tethered to Israel's permanence. As the foundation cracks, the architecture of empire begins to collapse with it. (Source: Rima Najjar)

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